

Rajyoga Meditation

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Often the word 'yoga' or 'meditation' conjures up, in a layman's mind the picture of an individual, seated upright in the lotus posture, with his eyes closed, in an incense-filled room or at the bank of a river, absorbed silently in a spiritual thought or chanting sanskrit incantation. This, however, is not a true picture of Rajyoga or Yoga-meditation, for the subtle act of meditation may occur anywhere and in any posture and alone or at a crowded place. But what is Meditation?

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Really speaking, Meditation is awareness of the incorporeal self and metaphysical absorption of one's mind in loveful and purposeful consciousness of God and His attributes. It is different from prayer as one does not make any supplication to the Deity but only contemplates lovefully on God, having attained clear knowledge of Him. It is not silent or subvocal repetition of a *mantra* or a fixed sacred formulae; it is not like *Sandhyā*, *Namāz* or *Pāth* (reading and reciting words of a holy scripture) nor is it accompanied with any physical movements, but rather it is the name given to immersion of one's mind in the holy remembrances, happy memories, pleasant recollections, ecstatic recollections, or blissful-loveful consciousness of the Supreme Being in His benign and loving relationship with souls.

In meditation, one enters into the portals of intimacy, closeness and experience of being in His presence rather than feel standing at a distance and looking around and seeking, and calling God as most people do in prayer.

It is not an effort of directing one's mind to God, knowing him rationally, convincingly and clearly but rather it is practised after one had explicit and implicit true knowledge of God and has a deep urge to be united to Him. In meditation, one does not try to concentrate one's mind on any image—gross or subtle—of a material or spiritual entity but on one Incorporeal God only.

In meditation, thoughts of deep love for God well up automatically, as it were, and there is no strained effort. Meditation is, therefore, more an act of *being*, rather than of *performing*.

Withdrawal and Holding of Mind

As we all know, man's mind is, ordinarily, occupied with hundreds of thoughts of the world. In yoga-meditation one withdraws one's mind from all the worldly thoughts, including the thoughts of one's own body, and one collects his consciousness, at least for sometime, into the shining peaceful light of the self and then links it to God, the Ocean of Peace. The inhibition of worldly thoughts and the recollection of Godly thoughts in the self or in the mind is attained by directing the flow of thought in a given direction, i.e. towards God in *Paramdhām* or His Supreme Abode. Thus, this practice bridges the gulf between the visible, mundane existence and the invisible mystery of the soul and one, thereby, accomplishes a re-orientation of one's consciousness from physical to spiritual or gross to subtle. **In this sense, meditation is withdrawal or reversal of one's consciousness from the body and its world to the soul and its silent world, or from the dark lanes of negative thoughts on to the bright path of contemplation of God. The consciousness, in meditation, is aligned to profound and deeper level of the imperishable spirit and to God. Some call this withdrawal as *Pratyahāra* and the holding of Mind is called *Dhārma*.**

Why Meditation?

Generally, man is caught up much of the time with worldly pursuits, sense-experiences, gross enjoyments, meeting the demands of life, discharging his social and professional responsibilities and with pleasures and pains so that he has little time to think of the unseen soul. *He has hardly any occasion to realise that, beneath the physical vesture, there are depths of being in which is locked the untapped potential of the immortal spiritual self or the treasures of ecstasy.* No doubt there are some people who are spiritually inclined but they too have only a nodding acquaintance with the soul and with God. Meditation is a spiritual practice which enables an aspirant to have *realisation* of the self and a vivid and refreshing experience of God. It enables a person to discover or re-discover the self and to have a channel for heart-to-heart communication with God. It enables a person to penetrate deeply and progressively into deeper levels of the mind and peep into the hidden world of reality. It opens unto man the portals that reveal the self and God and let this benign experience permeate his life so as to give it a new meaning and a new purpose.

It involves the turning of one's mind and the flow of his love in the direction of God, giving him the hot-line, to communicate with Him.

Thus, it is a technique of self-exploration, leading to the experience of heightened and expanded awareness, reaching God and bringing Him into the focus of the soul's awareness.

In a word, the principal object of Meditation is to bring the self in conscious touch with God, thus making it increasingly aware of its divine origin, divine destiny and divine and peaceful real nature. In Bhagwad gita, God says: "Hold your mind on Me (manmanā Bhav). This practice of heightened conscious of God is Yoga."

This practice of awareness of God opens greater orbits of being. One not only gets the first-hand vision and experience of the ultimate truth and the reality behind all realities but also one feels that one is not merely the creature but also creator of his environment. He experiences that his life is ever in the ascendent and his awakened consciousness is in *Paramdhām*—the region of undiminishing splendour. Previously, one was leading a life of worldly attachments, with mental gusts of pleasure or storms of pain and delusion and all that goes with it but now one feels the profound assurance that God's gracious hand is on him and under His umbrella of Light and Might, he is in a cool shade. **So, it is one of the major objects of Meditation to have God as one's Companion, Guide and Helpmate. If He is by our side and is our Guardian Angel, what better than this we want in the world?**

We ask: "Who has not felt pressed at times by the turmoil of events or the inanity of physical and natural environment, to seek inner calm and peace and fresh resources of vitality, within himself? Meditation is the sure way to experience real and lasting peace and to have in it a fountain of bliss.

Those who have not had spiritual orientation or who are not religiously disposed, would, perhaps, not believe that, by means of meditation, not only does one develop the positive attitude to life, love for the fellow beings, sympathy for the suffering souls and purity of mind, but one also gets his past errors of moral judgement, and acts, vitiated by ignoble tendencies, washed off the soul, for yoga-meditation is the detergent for the mind. **Thus, meditation is of great value because it brings change of heart. It helps one to act more with sound moral judgement and clean conscience which draws God's blessings on him.**

The understanding or beliefs on which Yoga-practice is based

Anyone who aspires to practise meditation, acts upon the conviction that there is, beyond all the transitory, mundane and phenomenal world, a subtle realm of reality which can be experienced only by means or methods other than employed in the gross world. He entertains the belief that the subtle realm of reality, which has soul, Supreme Soul and Soul World, which is beyond Subtle or Angelic World, holds, within it, all the causes from which the phenomenal is born. He also believes that the Supreme Soul is loveful and compassionate and is ready to embrace us.

Now the first step before one starts meditation is to have clear knowledge of what is meant by *soul*, *Supreme Soul or God*, *Soul World or Parlok (or Paramdhām)* and thus bring to end the vagueness of their definition or connotation. Brahma Kumaris, institution is helpful in this task with their definite delineation, presented in experiential terms, of the realm of consciousness that comprises man's immortal selfhood and God's immortal existence. Through short studies in this Institution, one arrives at a summary grasp of the fundamental truths about the soul, the Supreme Soul, etc.

He is given the understanding that the soul is an infinitesimal point of conscient and immortal light and that Mind, Intellect and predispositions or *Sanskārs* are its three inherent and everlasting faculties which are three aspects of manifestations of consciousness. The deep centre of the self is radiant with the mystery of power of life. Thus, man's soul is an ever-resplendent unit with divine nature and potentials and is 'triune' only in respect of its three forms of manifestation of its consciousness.

Stabilising mind in the awareness of God as soul's Mother-Father, etc., in Yoga

One is also given a refreshing knowledge of God as a Loveful Being who is full of knowledge and Bliss and is there to help and guide those who seek. In a metaphysical and metaphorical sense, He is the soul's Mother-Father, Friend and Philosopher, or better call Him its spiritual Guide and Master. He too is a self-luminous, infinitesimal point of conscient and non-physical Light. He constantly radiates vibrations of Love, Peace, Divine Light, Spiritual Might, Bliss, etc. which a soul can clearly experience when it has established its metaphysical or mental link with Him. He, the world's most beloved Mother-Father, abides in *Paramdhām* or the Soul World which is far beyond this phenomenal and ephemeral world of Matter. It is beyond the Sun and stars and the universe of elements and is a realm filled with divine light, called *Brahm*. *Brahm* shines in its splendour as one sees light in the horizon at the time of sun-rise or sunset.

He, the Supreme Being, who is perfectly divine and benign and salubrious in His nature is known as 'Shiva', Yahewa, Jehova, Allah or God. One has to have a link with Him, a living relationship with Him and an affectionate communication with Him through Meditation.

Practice of Rajyoga Meditation

So, when you begin your first meditational session or practice, let your thoughts well up naturally in the form of words as: 'I am a soul, I am eternal, immortal, conscient, radiant and self-luminous infinitesimal, tiny little star or point, a nuclear-like unit of eternal spiritual energy, with qualities of peace, etc. Yes, I am. I came

into this phenomenal world from a spiritual realm, from beyond, from what is known as the Soul World or *Paramdhām*, which is filled with divine crimson light and serenity and calm.

Thus recapitulating the summary knowledge, let your mind enter into its meaning, penetrating behind the words and ideas into the transcendental reality they signify. This will enable you to be free of all thoughts of your body and the environment and the worldly affairs and gradually your mind will be engaged totally with the awareness of God and His grace, His attributes, His divine and salubrious acts, His spiritual relationship, etc. Getting thus immersed in these thoughts to the exclusion of all others, feel unity with the Divine. By means of this steady flow of thought on God, you will reach a mental state or stage which transcends thought. In that state, one's mind is seeing no other forms, images or goals but only the splendour of God. In this state, you will experience bliss which cannot be described in words.

Experience

Thus, there will develop a steady flow of loveful thoughts with regard to God. It will invest the soul with new meaning. The soul will begin to understand or realise God in a new way, through proximity. Its consciousness will now touch God Who is now no longer a distant object. *Now you will experience that mental and emotional distance disappears and there is a sense of unity and an expansion of consciousness. The barriers of time and space have been broken and, in that moment of absorption, there would come some stillness of thought but the consciousness would be alert, active and dynamic as it would be absorbed in experience. The mind would now be emptied of all other thoughts of the gross world and its objects and person and, in its these free moments, it would receive intimation, prompting messages and blessings from the Divine and would experience pure intuition. He will now have spiritual or divine insight which will transform your outlook and understanding and work revolution in your personality traits. You will now have visions and realisation of deeper reality.*

Soon, it will change into a deeper and intimate relationship with the Supreme and it would be almost impossible to look on one's life without Him.

To understand the movement of consciousness when a person first starts meditating, let us follow, in imagination, what may happen in the case of a fiance.

How you should do it?

In olden days, until a few decades ago, it was customary in India that a *Brāhmin* or a *Brāhmini* gave the introduction of a suitable match, *in absentia*, to a virgin. The Brahmini mentioned to her the majestic figure, the graceful personality, the noble family-background, the unblemished character, the pleasing manners and the masculine qualities of the promising young man. Since the moment the girl nodded her approval or since

the moment she blushed, bent and smiled in assent, the engagement was mentally a settled fact though the betrothal was yet to be solemnised. From that very moment, she looked on all other men as brothers. Never would she now entertain the unholy thought of being another man's woman. No other man could now touch her body with the thought of winning her hand. The relationship was now life-long and sacred. Both had to be companions through thick and thin. Their relationship was deemed to have been settled in Heaven. From this second, the virgin mentally offered herself wholly to him. She became his, so to say. All this was reciprocated by the young man. Both had to be faithful to each other and be loving companions in the journey of life.

Now imagine to yourself the state of mind of the girl. Thoughts of her fiance automatically come to her mind. For this, she does not bring her mind to a halt but her thoughts automatically flow or dart in that direction. With profound love and fascination of union in her mind, thoughts of his beautiful form, his personal charm, his name, enchanting qualities, his attractive manner well up in never-ending, quick succession and without any strenuous effort.

The same thing happens with one who practises meditation: The relationship of a soul to God is as of a fiance also. **The soul has now been engaged or betrothed to God, after having attained introduction or Knowledge of Him. Shiva, the God, is the most beloved. He is the soul's Husband,** Lord or Master also. Like a faithful beloved, the soul has in mind the thoughts of Shiva as the prince charming or *Ranjhu*. She offers herself wholly to Him and now considers herself really His. Others are only brotherly souls but her relationship with Shiva or God is unique. It has sanctity *par excellence*. There is so much of love in this relationship as cannot find adequate expression. In the night, one wakes up from the middle of his sleep in his unforgettable memory and undeferable union. One changes side in his bed in loving dreams of Him. There is irresistible joy of being His and of being in His embrace. During the day, it is impossible to forget Him, for life has now no meaning except as most intimately related to Him. He is the Centre, the Hope and the pivot of life.

No need for artificial ways of concentration

Such being the state of one's mind, where lies the need to concentrate one's mind on the tip of one's nose, or on a point midway between the eye-brow, or on the lotus of the heart or the image of the deity, or the breath coming in and going out or to chant a mantra and sit in a particular position as some yogic literature suggests?

Disturbances

If one's mind gets caught up in superficial day-dreams, or inconsequential thoughts, or is filled up with turmoil, fear, worries, anticipations or memories of the ephemeral and the trivial, or is clouded by prejudices

and biases or flits from one point to another like a butterfly, then it means that one has no consummating love for the Supreme, there is no real urge for the sacred union, no earnestness for embracing the Beloved ones.

If condition of stability of thought and the upsurge of love for Him is not present, then it means that one has not fulfilled certain basic conditions. One is either not mentally faithful to His Love and has attractions of things and persons which distract his mind and which he finds irresistible. These attractions may be in the form of sex-lust or savoury dishes or fashionable goods or of massive amounts of money. To find out why one is not attracted to God with bigger force than one is attracted by worldly objects, one should do a little heart-searching. **To be the woman of two persons is *promiscuity*; even so to let another be partner in one's love for God, is also disloyalty, profanity or infidelity.**

Purity of Mind and harmlessness of behaviour and habits are valuable assets

Let the aspirant know that one's life-style, associated directly or indirectly with violence, hate, vengeance, anger, harshness of speech, sexual impulse, etc. is the breeder of delusion; such habits and tendencies as these easily deflect one's mind from God; such a one is not fit to be embraced by God. There is a sacred saying that "*the treasure (attainable through Meditation) is guided by faithful demons and gnomes.*" The ignoble tendencies referred to above are the demons. Purity of Mind, Chastity, Vegetarian food-habits, etc., are the mounted guards, so to say, that protect one from the demons on the soul's journey towards her beloved God and it is these which take one to the Treasure.

Natural and Easy Meditation or *Sahaj Rājyoga*

These conditions having been fulfilled, when one is engaged to God in the totality of the self, then one simply is in meditation. The question of harnessing one's mind, or reining mental processes, or controlling one's emotional reactions to the environment, or holding the body in a particular posture do not arise in the one who is drunk with intoxicating love for God, **for his mind, through keen aspiration, is brought to the state of a placid lake in no time. His mind is instantly clear and calm like a mountain pool. It is unruffled by the winds and gusts of prejudices and hate, aspirations, and desire. So, it reflects, in its depth, the light of God, the Spiritual Sun. Meditation to him is like switching on the consciousness and the moment he does this, he feels the flow from the Highest and Holiest Soul, the strong currents of love, peace, power and bliss, all coalesced.**

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